

# The Republican.

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## ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN ASSOCIATION OF DEISTS IN DUBLIN.

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IN No. 15, was inserted an extract from a Dublin paper, respecting a new Society of Deists in Dublin, and the treatment which they had received from those who call themselves Christians: in the present number is introduced, a statement of the principles of this society as published by themselves. It will be seen that their principles are purely good, without a mixture of evil, as far as the introduction of new mischief is in question. It is to the raising up of such associations, and to the open advocacy of such principles, that the people of Ireland have alone to look for amelioration. This, I hail, as the first real step towards the improvement of their condition; the first real blow at the tyranny, and misery, and degradation, which intral them. I have been long purposing to address the Catholics as a sect, and more particularly the Catholics of Ireland; this coincidence has become a new stimulus, which will urge me to do it either in the next or following number. Nothing but the pressure of correspondences, hitherto received, will defer it beyond No. 19.

I do not assent to every thing I find in the following paper; still I can see that it is carried far enough for the benefit of Ireland, as Ireland is at present: far enough, as the principles of a public association, in such a place as Dublin, which was evinced in the late riotous attack upon Mr. Taylor, his friends, and the place of meeting. Considering this, I do not hesitate publicly to advocate the cause of this association, and think, that, if the principle can be extended throughout Ireland, it will soon become the Irishman's real Messiah—his right Catholic cause.

I fancy, that, I can see in this association, something of the good effect of Mr. Owen's visit to that unhappy country. Mr. O. publicly confesses, that he has no hope of mix-

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ing up a moral and useful education, of making a moral and improving people, with such a system of education as has hitherto existed in this country. The Bible forms one of those *bad circumstances* in education, which he wishes to see removed: and it is much to be desired, that he should find encouragement to stand forth and proclaim this fact in the most intelligible language: that he should not fear any priestly brow-beating, nor suffer from the malice of bad men flourishing on ill founded systems.

I exhort Mr. Taylor, and his friends in Dublin, and Irishmen every where, to stand boldly forward and defend their principles of UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE. If martyrs must be had in consequence; let them be prepared: better to die in doing good than to live in inflicting and suffering constant pain.

RICHARD CARLILE.

Dorchester Gaol, April 25, 1824.

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#### RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIETY OF UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE.

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It having been objected to the Society of Universal Benevolence, that its existence was not founded in the recognition of any fixed and determinate religious principles; and such an objection, being, in addition to the great mistake of it, calculated to injure the society's reputation, and to prevent the accession of many conscientious persons who would otherwise attach themselves to it: the committee of the society has authorized and approved the following declaration of their religious principles, to be solemnly subscribed and cordially and conscientiously professed by all persons that shall be appointed to the high, and responsible office of Chaplains, Readers, or Lecturers of this Society.

1. We entirely and conscientiously believe, that there is One True and only God, the Creator, Governor and Preserver of all things; Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Eternal; Incomprehensibly Great, and Infinitely Good; without body, parts, or passions; having no defect; and wanting no perfection: and consequently we hold all doctrines whatever, to be false and wicked, which in any degree disparage or seem to disparage any one of these attributes of the Almighty.

2. We believe that it is our happiness and our duty to entertain in our hearts, and to cultivate in our minds, a deep and influential sense of God's fatherly care and providence over us; and



that we should cherish that natural apprehension which our reason giveth us, that we please him when we do well, and forfeit his favour when we do amiss; and that we are responsible and amenable to him for the faithful occupation of all the talents, faculties, opportunities, and abilities which he hath committed to us.

3. We believe that nothing can render us acceptable to God but virtue; and that virtue is nothing more than a highly cultivated reason, which must in all cases lead us to what is right and fit in action, or in suffering.

4. We believe that God hath given us reason, to be our guide; and that reason is an absolutely perfect and sufficient guide; and that when we obey any other guide in whole or in part, we are traitors to ourselves.

5. We hold ourselves bound to promote the happiness and peace of all men; and to seek our good only in subserving that of others; that we should look on every individual of the human race as a second self; and be as unwilling to do him harm, and as ready to do him good, as we are grieved at injuries, and pleased with services done to ourselves.

6. We hold ourselves bound to love all men, even those who may calumniate and injure us; in like manner as we still love ourselves when we have cause of grief or vexation against ourselves.

7. We hold ourselves bound to be concerned and to sympathize in the sorrows of all those whom we know to be afflicted in mind, body or estate; and to labour for their recovery, no less than we would for the ease or cure of our own bodies.

8. We hold ourselves bound to look on the whole human race as one great family, equally dear and precious in every individual member of it, to the common God and Father of us all.

9. We hold ourselves bound to cultivate these views and dispositions in ourselves by all means; not only for the sake of that unspeakable joy of heart which is attached to them; but as being the only means whereby we can acceptably testify our love and obedience to God: and to this end,—

10. It is our duty to decline and banish from our minds as the greatest impiety, all sectarian, narrow, or bigoted notions; and from our lips, as the greatest profaneness, all such expressions and metaphors of speech, as would imply that any men are sinners, or enemies or strangers to God; or that any being, which he hath created, can by any means cease to be dear and precious to him.

11. But above all things we abjure and renounce all wars, and deeds of war: we account their glory to be shame, and their trophies to be monuments of human wickedness and folly: we believe them to be unnecessary to states, unreasonable in themselves, and infinitely ruinous to morality and happiness.

12. We believe and maintain the natural equality of all men.

13. We honour the King.

14. We respect and obey all wise and just laws.

15. We hold that no man ought to be made to suffer in his person, in his property, or in his reputation for any opinions whatever, which shall not influence his conduct or temper to the injury of others.

16. Believing in God, and in God alone, we do deny and disclaim all pretensions of authority over men's minds or persons, that hath at any time been, or is, or may be usurped, as under the sanction of his most holy name; and seeing that all men live and move and breathe and have their being in him, and must at all times have been equally concerned to please him——

17. We hold it an impiety to admit that he hath ever made known to any men further than they have cultivated their own faculties, what he hath concealed from others; or concealed from any men what they were concerned to know: and lastly, we hold——

18. That God hath set bounds and limits to our powers of reasoning, beyond which we cannot think, as well as to our strength of body, beyond which we cannot toil; but that within these limits we have compass enough to work out for ourselves, even in this world, an absolutely perfect and complete happiness.

ROBERT TAYLOR,

*Chaplain and Secretary.*

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## NOTICE.

### SOCIETY OF UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE.

THE Reverend the Chaplain informs the Congregation that (*in proper place and season,*) he is always ready to defend and maintain by rational discussion the RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIETY OF UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE; to clear the doubts, and answer the queries of all conscientious and *respectful* inquirers—but that their Assemblies being appropriated to Devotional purposes, and *strictly* and *entirely* religious; the Society claim the rights of other Religious Assemblies, and cannot allow any sort of discussion to take place, nor any interruption to be made on their SACRED SERVICE.

REVEREND R. TAYLOR,

Chaplain and Secretary, No. 7, Bachelor's Walk, Dublin.



## SHEFFIELD.

To shew how we are beating all the Bible, the Religious Tract, and the Missionary Societies, I will, from time to time, record what is passing and concerns us under the heads of the different towns, as a sort of report of local progress.

Having been uniformly badly suited in an agent in Sheffield, I resolved, with his consent, to have William Holmes there; who was lately liberated from the Giltspur Street Compter, after an imprisonment of 26 months, for selling in the shop 55, Fleet Street. Holmes got there early in March, and soon suited himself with a shop, at 28 West-Bar Green. His determination was, to sell every thing openly, as it is sold at 84, Fleet Street, London. He had not opened his shop many days, before the Christian protectors of Christianity paid him a visit; and the following dialogue passed.

*Adams. (a vestry Clerk, drawing out his book.)* Who is the proprietor of this shop?

*Holmes.* I am.

*A.* What is your name?

*H.* My name is Holmes.

*A. (Writing down the name.)* You said your name was John Holmes?

*H.* No. I said my name was Holmes.

*A.* What is your Christian name?

*H.* I don't chuse to tell you.

*A.* You will not be allowed to inundate the town of Sheffield with your blasphemy. — If there is any law to be had in the town, you shall have it. I bought P-P-Palmer's P-P-Principles of Nature here yesterday myself, and there are now people rotting in jails for selling it: you are acting in defiance of those prosecutions.

*H.* You say there are people rotting in jails; it is a proof of the mildness and benignity of your religion.

*Clark. (a Tax-collector, stepping forward.)* Are you not ashamed to expose, and fill the town with such trash, by doing which, you run the risk of imprisonment here, and damnation hereafter; you are acting contrary to the dictates of your own conscience.

*H.* You, Sir, ought to allow that others are as conscien-

tious as yourself, in their profession; my conscience tells me I am right.

C. You scoundrel you have got no conscience.

H. I never yet knew a man destitute of conscience.

C. Your conscience is seared with a hot iron.

*Farnsworth. (another Town Officer, roaring like a bull, away!)* Well, you see a man holding a high office in the town has promised you prosecution, and he will keep his word.  
(going.)

H. Will you tell me his, or your, name?

C. No, I won't.

H. Thanks to your Christian candour, I told you mine.

There was a fourth officer, a sort of beadle, but he said nothing.—Report tells me, that the officious Mr. Adams gives all the poor Sheffield women a proof of the advantages of having an *amorous Vestry Clerk*; and that there are at least fifty women, who will say he is a nice man and an excellent parish officer; but that, another officer has the greatest difficulty to find fathers for all the bastard children born there, to say nothing of those born in holy wedlock through parish assistance! All these Parish Officers are excellent men, particularly where they hold permanent offices!

After this visit, Holmes fully expected that he was to be summoned before their worships, at the next bench. I believe, he even prepared a speech upon the law and the peaceable character of true Christians, to address to their worships; but no summons came.—It is said, that a Mr. Justice Parker was written to, at Bath, and that he had good sense enough to write back an answer, to the following effect: "*O—let the man alone and leave the people of Sheffield to their own good sense, as to whether they will or will not read his books: if you prosecute him, we shall have the town in a blaze and every one running after him and his books!*"

So the menacing Parish Officers can find no law in Sheffield for the obstruction of the progress of knowledge, and free discussion to acquire it; and thus, Paine's *Age of Reason*, and Palmer's *Principles of Nature*, are naturalized in Sheffield; and William Holmes is likely to become a first-rate Yorkshire Citizen. Had the prosecutions commenced, as threatened, Mrs. Holmes had determined to follow her husband, and two young men to follow her if she were prosecuted: so that there was no doubt of the town of Sheffield soon getting into a blaze.

In Huddersfield, by Mr. James Penny, of Manchester Street, we have now *open sale* of all prosecuted and other



books; and the same at 25, Calls, Leeds, by Mr. John Smithson. Thus the thing goes on, in Lancashire and Yorkshire, right well. Mr. Armstrong of Stokesly has stood his ground throughout the struggle in the most open and spirited manner. But in Scotland, there is no law against a Sheriff who steals the whole of a man's property for amusement! However, when Lord Eldon goes out of office, he may take the Trinity with him. He ought to get all the three persons pensioned: for out of office, and no pension, there will be no unity, but all sorrow and grumbling.

RICHARD CARLILE.

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TO RICHARD CARLILE.

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FELLOW CITIZEN,

April 4, 1824.

I ONCE thought of publishing a translation of Dupuis' "Examination of the Apocalypse," but various circumstances have obliged me to change my mind. I am unwilling, however, that those among my brother Republicans who are unacquainted with the French language, should therefore remain ignorant of Dupuis; and accordingly I purpose, in a few letters, to make an abstract of his most important treatise, namely, that "On the Christian Religion."

His object is to prove, that Jesus Christ never really existed; but that, like Bacchus, Hercules, Adonis, Atys, and many other fabled personages of antiquity, he was a mere personification of the Sun. According to this theory, of which there is some account in Volney's Ruins, the Virgin Mary is the constellation Virgo, the twelve Apostles the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and the Devil or Satan the Serpent of the Celestial Globes.

Now, it is evident, that the proof of this cannot be understood, by persons utterly unacquainted with that part of popular astronomy, which was known to the ancients; but I hope and trust, that the number of such persons among your readers is very limited; yet, even to these I shall render myself somewhat comprehensible, as it will be my object throughout, to place every thing in the clearest light, and to make use of the most simple expressions. At the same time, I must observe, that as I dislike prolixity, I shall, in general, merely present certain passages to the eye of the reader, and shall then leave him to form his own conclusions. I must also add, that from my want of the necessary books, I am unfortunately incapable of verifying by far the greater part of the quotations, a misfortune, which I hope, in some degree,

to atone for, by translating every extract as literally as possible.

But no doubt I shall be asked, "Who was Dupuis?" I can only answer, what I have read in books, that he was born of poor parents in 1742; that his learning rendered him a distinguished member of the French Institute; and that after a life of unimpeachable integrity, he sank into annihilation in the year 1809, leaving his widow very ill provided for. His great work (*The Origin of all Religions*) was first published in 1794, in 4to. and 8vo.; but the edition, which will be principally made use of in the following letters, will be that in eight volumes 8vo. of 1822. The first volumes contain explanations of the fables of Osiris, Hercules, and other Pagan Gods, and it is not till the third volume of the 4to. edition, and fifth of the last 8vo. one, that we meet with a professed explanation of the fable of Christ.

The first part of this admirable treatise relates to the fall of man; the second to the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and the third to the doctrine of the unity and trinity: the fourth is only a recapitulation of the other three.

I may remark, once for all, that from his preface to his conclusion, Dupuis regardeth the superstition of mankind with the most sublime contempt. "The gaunt spectre of religion (saith he) seizeth upon man in his cradle, accompanieth him during his whole existence, and more frightful in its threats than consoling in its promises, followeth him to his very tomb. Credulous mortals dare not account, even to themselves, for their own opinions; and crouching under the servile yoke of priests, from the dawn of life to the night of death, sacrifice their reason to *faith*, a word, which, in religion, is synonymous with credulity."

Dupuis afterwards blameth philosophers for abusing instead of explaining Christianity. "The vulgar (saith he) make Christ both God and man: the philosophers of the present day only allow him to have been a mortal. But as for us, we shall not make a God of him, and still less a man than a God, for the *sun* is further removed from human nature, than from divine."

In the beginning of the first chapter we are told, that the mysterious doctrines of that Mithriac worship which is called Christianity, must principally be explained by the sacred allegories of the religion of Zoroaster, which the Jews adopted in their cosmogony.

As Christ was required to repair the evil occasioned by the seduction of Eve, the whole of Christianity may be said to depend upon the story in the third chapter of Genesis: for, as the reparation of an allegorical crime cannot but be itself allegorical; therefore, if the story of the fall of man be allegorical, the story of Christ must also be allegorical. Consequently, if we can produce a sufficient number of authorities to prove the first allegory, the second followeth as a natural deduction.



Now Thomas Burnet alloweth, that the account of a woman's talking with a serpent, &c. &c. doth, if taken literally, involve considerable difficulties. "Prejudice (saith he) hath a great effect upon the mind. We receive and embrace this history without examination, because it was written by Moses. If we found it in a Grecian philosopher, in a Rabbi, or in a Mahommedan writer, we should be filled with doubts and objections."

It is indeed, as Dupuis remarketh, rather extraordinary, that a woman's plucking an apple should only be pardoned upon condition, that men should become guilty of the great, though impossible crime, of deicide. Reason, that sacred light which nature hath given every man to guide his judgment, rejecteth with indignation such idle tales, when offered as historical relations. If however there be among our readers, any one whose daring credulity can digest such absurdities, we recommend him to read no farther, for we address ourselves only to *reasoners*.

But why should we not explain the whole allegorically, according to the spirit of the Orientals? We know that the Persians and Egyptians were fond of concealing their philosophy under mysterious fables. Some interpreters of Timæus have imagined that the whole of the pretended war of the Athenians against the Atlantes, is merely a philosophical romance, the separation of chaos. The Phœnician cosmogony of Sanchoniathon, though written in the style of history, is made up of personifications of Heaven, Earth, Time, the Sun, &c. Origenes telleth Celsus, that "the Egyptian Philosophers veil their knowledge of the Deity in fables and allegories." "The learned, he addeth, may penetrate into the signification of all Oriental mysteries, (such as those of the Persians, the Indians, and the Syrians) but the vulgar can only see the outside of things."

The whole of the Indian Theology is written in allegories, as we may judge from their fables upon Pareswati, Vichnou, Routren, and Bruma; as well as from those upon the five first powers which God created, and which are perfectly similar to the five elements, of which, according to Manes, God composed the armour of the first man. Moreover, the Valentinians and Gnostics expressed their most abstract ideas of the divinity in this style. Thus they imagined a Propator or Progenitor. Profundity and his wife Silence, Mind and his wife Truth, and the whole train of Æons and their wives. So also (we may remark *en passant*) the Christians have personified the Logos or Word, and the Holy Ghost or Principle of Intelligence.

Let us now come to the Hebrews. Maimonides, the most learned of the Rabbies, saith, "We must not, like the vulgar, understand literally what is written in the book of the creation; otherwise our wise men of old, would not have so earnestly recommended us to conceal its meaning, and to refrain from raising up the allegorical veil, which covereth the truth contained under it. Un-

derstood literally, this work presenteth us with ideas of the Deity which are most ridiculously absurd. The true meaning of the work of the six days ought never to be divulged." Maimonides addeth, that this enigmatical style was not peculiar to Moses and the Jewish Doctors, but that all the sages of antiquity participated in it.

The treatises of Philo Judæus have scarcely any other object than the allegorical explanation of scripture, particularly of the Tree of Life, the rivers of Paradise, and the other fictions of the book of Genesis.

Origenes saith: "It is allowed by all who have any knowledge of the Scriptures, that every thing is mentioned enigmatically. This writer and all his followers, according to Cedrenus, have no doubt but the history of Adam and Eve and the Terrestrial Paradise is an allegory.

The Therapeutæ, the most learned of the Jewish sects, held that the letter was only the body of the things contained in scripture, but that the concealed and mystical meaning was their soul. According to Philo, the Therapeutæ were the only persons acquainted with the real signification of these allegories, which were explained in the commentaries and treatises, left them by their ancient sages.

Josephus, Philo, and Clemens Alexandrinus are agreed, that the distribution of the Jewish Temple, and the ornaments of the dress of the High Priest, represented the whole of nature; and particularly Heaven and Earth, the Sun, Moon, and Planets; the signs of the Zodiac, and the elements.

Augustinus, in his book "De Civitate Dei," alloweth that many persons consider the adventure of Eve and the Serpent, and the Terrestrial Paradise, as a fiction and allegory. We may indeed say with Beausobre, that Augustinus, in his treatise against the Manicheans, who protested against the three first chapters of Genesis, seemeth to give up Moses and the Old Testament; and to confess, that these chapters cannot be understood literally, without injuring religion, and ascribing to God things unworthy of him.

Origenes had already said, upon this pretended history, "What man of common sense will ever persuade himself that there was a first, a second, and a third day; and that each of these days had an evening and a morning, before there were any sun, moon, or stars? What man can be so silly, as to believe, that God, acting the part of a gardner, planted a garden in the East? that the Tree of Life was a real tree?" &c. This author compareth the history of the temptation to the mysterious fable of the birth of Love, whose father was Poros, or Abundance, and whose mother was Poverty.

To quote only one authority more, out of the multitude that might be brought forward, we will observe, that Hierax, a learned



Manichean, had written commentaries upon the work of six days, which, according to St. Epiphanius, he referred to allegory. "He was (says Beausobre) of the same opinion that many of the fathers were, that the history of the creation, and that the temptation, were not to be understood literally."

Here, Richard Carlile, I terminate my first letter. If it be thought worth reading, I shall be happy to furnish thee with many others; and, indeed, in less than a dozen such, I have no doubt but I shall be able to abridge the whole of this admirable treatise upon the Christian religion. Before concluding, I must observe, that, as I do not wish to excite persecution, I hereby permit thee to moderate all the opinions which my letters may express. This is a task for which thou art peculiarly fitted: as the persecutions of the bigots must have enabled thee to graduate the metaphysical thermometer with considerable accuracy; and to perceive at first sight the distance between the fever heat of supposed blasphemy, and the temperate warmth of allowable discussion.—Albeit, the heretical Republican, might perhaps, be pardoned a smile, if a sentence were affirmed to be blasphemous, which might be proved, to the confusion of the tyrants, an extract from some writer of their own superstition.

I remain, with the highest esteem, fellow citizen,

THY FRIEND.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

WORTHY CITIZEN,

Manchester, Feb. 28, 1824.

BEING a regular reader of your "Republican," and seeing it open to free discussion on all subjects, I embrace the opportunity, in common with others, to offer my humble opinion upon the following subjects:—viz.

First.—A few remarks upon Christianity.

Second.—A few observations upon Deistical principles—and the immortal soul of man; with my unreserved opinion upon Materialism.

1st. Having been born of Christian parents, I was instructed in the belief of the fall of man, from the Garden of Eden, by the sin of Adam; in the redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ; in the duty of attending all the ordinances of grace, and, by the bye, to put a few pence into the box; and in passive obedience to all in authority over me whether tyrants or not; I was not to resist, if they did wrong; they were to receive their reward in the next world. I was

also to believe the Bible, that is, in the way my parents taught me, as a Methodist, otherwise eternal damnation was to be my portion, devils to be my companions, and hell my home. I was not suffered to go into any other Chapel but those of the Methodists, as if the Bible did not support the Calvinist in election and predestination; the Anabaptists in dipping; the members of the Apostolic Church in embracing the female who sits next to them, and in greeting her with a kiss—as St. Paul commanded.

Not being allowed to read any thing but the Bible, and such other books as they thought proper, till I was twenty years of age, I lived in a notion that all those things were right, and every thing else wrong; but, above all, I was taught that Thomas Paine was an exceeding bad man; and all his writings blasphemy. Hundreds of times have I heard those loving creatures, those lambs of the Lord, in joyful extacy commit the body of Mr. Paine to the ditch, and his soul to eternal condemnation and hell fire!

No man ever began to examine any books with more prejudice, than I did those of Mr. Paine's. I believed, as thousands of other deluded people do, that they were all lies and blasphemy. To my great astonishment, when I had read the writings of this wise, benevolent, and humane man, I was constrained to own, there was a great deal of truth and good sense in them, which at once shook my belief in what I had been instructed from my infancy; though I must confess, that my prejudices were so much in favour of Christianity, that I should never have disbelieved the inspiration of the Bible, the Godhead of Christ, and the dogmas of the priests, had I not found, on the strictest examination, from the Bible itself, that it was impossible to be the dictation of an all-wise being. The plain, barefaced contradictions, the cruelties, the unnatural commands given to be enforced by the different monsters, for I can call them nothing else, soon convinced me that it was a forgery.

I have read the letter addressed to you by Robert Hindmarsh, of Manchester. That Reverend Gentleman observes—the science of correspondences, with which the Bible is written, sufficiently proves its inspiration. Of all the arguments advanced in defence of the Bible, which have come to my view, this is the worst. I should very much wish the Reverend Gentleman to shew us how the following passages correspond with each other. Moses says, the Lord commanded him to write, that he (the Lord) would visit



the sins of the father upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

Ezekiel says, the Lord commanded him to write that the Lord would not visit the sins of the father upon the children; neither should the father bear the iniquity of the children. Again, the Lord commanded Moses to say: I the Lord am your God, and beside me there is none else. I should wish the Reverend Gentleman to show us how it came to pass, that when the three Hebrew children, as they are termed, in the book of Daniel, would not fall down and worship the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar set up, and were cast into the fiery furnace; behold, says Daniel, there were four and the fourth was like unto the son of God. This is another little job for the Reverend Gentleman to do. Daniel, according to the Bible, was a Jew, and of course never believed that God had a son, and I think, sufficiently proves, that this passage was not written till after the notion of a Son of God existed. Again, let us compare the seventh chapter of Isaiah, and the xxviii. chapter of the second book of Chronicles, and we shall behold a little more of the Reverend Gentleman's science of correspondences. At the time Isaiah wrote this chapter (if ever such a person did write it) we find that Jerusalem was in danger of being besieged by two armies, the army of Assyria, and the army of Israel. It appears, that the King of Jerusalem and the people were afraid of those two armies conquering them; for it states, that their hearts trembled with fear as the leaves of the trees are shaken with the wind. The King sends for Isaiah, to know what the Lord says concerning Jerusalem. Isaiah declares in the name of the Lord, that the two armies shall not conquer Jerusalem; but what is the result? Why, according to the xxviii. chapter of the second book of Chronicles, we find that the two armies actually did conquer Jerusalem, take many thousand prisoners, and perhaps, Isaiah amongst the rest. Now let the Reverend Gentleman show us by his science of correspondences how this false prophecy could be dictated by an all-wise being.

Again, as it respects Jesus Christ's mission. According to the New Testament he first came to make peace upon earth, and good-will towards men; but afterwards, we find him exclaiming, "I came not to bring peace on earth but a sword; I came to set at variance, the father against the son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; and the mother in law against the

daughter in law &c.," and we have a right to conclude from the expression of not bringing peace on earth, that he came for the purpose of setting man in general against man. The actions of the Christians fulfil the meaning of the word: the persecution of yourself and family: the persecution of all the brave men who have followed your example: and the Christian persecutions of an individual nature which we daily see, such as turning men out of employ for their opinions, all serve to prove, that Christianity is an evil to the welfare of mankind. I shall now finish my first proposition, and proceed to my second, leaving the Reverend Mr. Hindmarsh, to clear off the doubts, as to the utility of Christianity, by his new science of correspondences in the Bible.

2d. After I renounced the Christian religion, I embraced the opinions, on theological subjects, of a Deist believing in a first cause; or, in other words, believing that matter was put in motion by some supernatural being, or power, which I could not satisfactorily comprehend. I thought it impossible, that the whole mass of matter, which we behold, either with our natural eye, or with any other means, could be organized, and put into motion, order, and form, without the power and knowledge of some supernatural being; but on examining more minutely, the qualifications and attributes attributed to this great supernatural cause, I began to doubt the existence of such a being, as a great first cause called God. According to the definition of the spiritualists, he is a spirit, which cannot be handled, nor felt: now, if this spirit cannot be touched, handled, nor felt by any thing which is material, no more can any thing which is material be touched by that spirit: this, I think, sufficiently proves, that, that which is material, could never have been put in motion by that which is spiritual and immaterial.

I believed that man possessed a soul, which was immortal, the essence of which was spiritual and immaterial, and which could and would exist in some future state, independent of this present material frame. As it is hard to conceive a time when matter did not exist, and when it had to be put in motion by some unknown cause, so it is also as hard for me, or any other living creature, to form an idea of what the soul of man is composed, or where, or how, it forms its abode in this material body. Daily experience and natural philosophy fully convince me, that man possesses nothing which is spiritual or immaterial: but then, the Rev. Mr. Hindmarsh will call this assertion.



Let us examine this question more minutely, and bring forward some evidence, if possible, to prove this assertion.

If the soul of man be distinct from the body; and if its essence be immaterial and spiritual, it is impossible that it can be injured by any thing which is material. I know that it is argued, that *thought is immaterial*. If we grant this to be the case; yet, it is the effect of that which is material. If it could be proved by the advocates for the immortal soul, that the faculties which produce thought cannot be injured when the material body is injured, then they would have gained one point against Materialists; but, as this is not the case, we gain the substantial part of the argument against the spiritualists.

I will now endeavour to show that this faculty of thought or understanding, can be injured. I am at this moment writing, and my mental faculties, or thought and understanding, are assisting me to proceed in my object of finishing this letter; but if some person was to come behind and give me a blow on the back of my head so as to injure my brain, I should not then be able to think, nor spell another word. No man will attempt to deny this: and this proves, that thought and understanding can be injured when the material body suffers any severe injury. Many lose their reason and understanding by fevers, and never more regain them while they live. If the faculty termed immortal soul were immaterial and spiritual, it would be impossible for it to suffer, by any thing which is material.

If we take a child of twelve months old, we find it thinks according to its age. Follow it to ten or twelve years, we still find its reason and understanding increasing with its age; at thirty or manhood, its memory and reason are still proportionable to its age. If we follow it to eighty or ninety, as the body decays, so the memory, the reason or understanding, or the faculties which produced them have decayed also; which would never be the case, if those faculties were immortal. I now conclude, that the only part, which is imperishable or immortal, is the material of which my body is composed.

CHARLES NASEBY.

HERE IS METHODISM WITHOUT ITS MASK,  
OR THE GENTLE SHEPHERD OF HUDDERS-  
FIELD CONFOUNDEDLY ANGRY!

MR. CARLILE.

SIR,

Huddersfield, April 12, 1824.

I TRANSMIT you an acknowledgement of the receipt of your *compliments* and *criticisms*, which I do most sincerely assure you, are equal in point of *estimation* to me; and will be much easier to digest than you find my small pamphlet.

As it respects my "*bread and water*," I have frequently given them to my *enemy*, though I never considered such a person worthy of my charity; yet, that made the obligations of humanity no less binding. I consider, that the helpless hungry have a claim on my bounty, and if you be such, when you come to Huddersfield, you will be welcome to my humble fare. Nor will you be the first of your persuasion, that will have partaken of my hospitality. It is not long, since a bright star of yours, occupied my best bed for two nights; and I received, in return, his most hearty assurance that he had no conscience. I, therefore, expected no thanks, and told him to be assured, that he should be the last man to whom I would think of trusting any thing. I have since that, put the question pointedly to Mr. A. H., of this town, who positively declared, that he had no such thing as a conscience; but if I were to tell him, in the heat of contention, that he had no reason, I am sure he would not be pleased.

I perceive you have made it out, that conscience is reason; and if it be, I can prove, that two of your brightest satellites in this town have denied their reason. Nor did I ever converse with one who called himself a Materialist, that would acknowledge a conscience, and still they are all great pretenders to reason. So that your criticisms fall not on me, but on your own head. You have strangely missed your way, man—look again at my unanswered pamphlet: It will speak plain, if you can read; and if you cannot, it is not my fault. And as to the "*learning*," the "*rhetoric*," the logic, and philosophy, over which you seem to have nearly broken your teeth, I care not for the pamphlets' consequence in these respects. And, I am sure, you are not able to judge of its merit. You ought to have been the last man to find fault with it on those accounts; for, I am sure, if I were the author of such a mass of jargon as you have sent into the world, I should feel truly ashamed.

I leave you (*Wise Critic*) to feast on your "*Criticisms*," and to adore your "*chemistry*," your "*just-born*" TRUTH, and the magical powers of your wonderful "*gas*."



What I have said in my pamphlet, I *have said*\*; and will abide by it: and what you have said by way of reply, amounts to *no reply at all*; I shall therefore be sparing with you, for I think it unhandsome to *thrash a conquered opponent*.

If you will inform me what I have to do with *Chemistry* when I say—two and two make *four*, I shall be obliged; I am certain it is a “*TRUTH*.”

If you contend, that conscience is *reason*, and that those who possess it are *moral*; I am sure the Materialists have no claim to it.

THOMAS SHEPHERD.

*Note.*—I should not have printed this letter, had it not been pointedly requested in a postscript, and a complaint made of a former and similar one not having been printed. Thomas Shepherd likes to see his name in print; whether it be or be not connected with matter *logical, rhetorical, and correct*, concerns not him. So he says!

Thomas Shepherd does not know what he has to do with chemistry, when he says *two and two make four*. I'll tell thee, Thomas. When thou sayest *two and two make four*, thou sayest *nothing*; for *two and two, as words, do not make four*. But wert thou to say, that *two things and two things make four things*; then, Thomas, and then only, would thou know it to be a “*TRUTH*.” Again, Thomas, now attend to what I am about to say, when thou speakest of *two things, or four things, such things* must have something to do with *chemistry*: for *all things are chemical things, as all things are matter*. Dost thou understand, Thomas Shepherd? Thou art one of the dullest of my scholars—of my Huddersfield “*satellites*!” and after what thou hast said, thou must change and improve greatly, before I shall either tumble thy *best bed, break thy bread, or drink out of thy pitcher*.

Thomas Shepherd is like the Methodist Parson, who visited the Salford Zetetic Society, and on hearing one of the members discoursing of *physics* as hostile to the Christian religion, and that the Christians generally were ignorant on this head.—“Gentlemen, (says he) I did not know that it was necessary to be acquainted with *medicine*, for a right understanding about the Christian religion!” So says Thomas Shepherd of chemistry, and wonders what it has to

\* I AM, THAT I AM! CONVINCINGLY REASONABLE! CONSCIENTIOUSLY GRAND!

R. C.

do with Christians! Nothing, Thomas, unless it would enable us to analyze the contents of thy *caput*: for Christians have nothing to do with any thing that is real and chemical.

I hear, that Thomas is about to submit to be drilled into something like tuition, to set up as a public character, and as my opponent. In his pamphlet, he tells the public, that he is *industrious* and of *domesticated manners*, and seems to hint, that it is time for some one to step forth to *defend God and God's people* against one who is hostile to both. He has invited me to read his pamphlet again, so I am now at the first page of his letter to me, where he says:

"Had you, in your attack, manifested a proper regard for truth, the defensive position might have been taken with much more pleasure; but as your pamphlet abounds with untruths and misrepresentations, it becomes the task of your opponent to contradict and refute."

Why, Thomas, I have always understood that to *contradict and refute* was taking a *defensive position*; and that such only can be called, in letters, the *defensive position*. But as to *contradictions* and *refutations* I find none in your pamphlet—as to *untruths* and *misrepresentations*, you have found none in mine; and, if, as you say, it has confirmed your opinions of the bad characters of the Materialists, it proves that such opinions were ill-founded, and the result of bigotry, prejudice, and ignorance.

Since I wrote last, I have found a new instance of *suicide and of child murder*, arising from the madness of Methodism. The suicide is a case I take from a New York Paper called the Gospel Herald, published in August last, in the following words:

#### ANOTHER VICTIM TO THE DOCTRINE OF ENDLESS TORTURE.

Mrs. S——, a matron of respectable connexions in this city, a short time since became a convert to Methodism. The present violent and boisterous method of conversion, where threats of endless misery, instead of persuasion, are resorted to, produced mental distraction; and the wretched victim of fanatics cut her throat with a razor. Surgical aid, however, restored her to partial health of body, but the poison of error remained to torture her mind. She afterwards stabbed herself with a knife. She recovered from these wounds; and procuring a quantity of laudanum, crossed the East River, and was afterwards found in a field, a mass of putrefaction. Thus is added another to the long catalogue of victims to the doctrines of devils.



The child murder is a case that was tried at the last Launceston Assizes,

Emma George, aged 19, was indicted for the murder of her brother, Benjamin George, a child under seven years of age, by strangling him with a silk handkerchief. It appeared on the trial that the prisoner's mind had been wrought on by attending a religious meeting of fanatics;—and that she had an irresistible temptation to commit murder, that she might the sooner go to heaven. At one time the idea of murdering her own mother came into her head;—but at length she determined to hang her little brother, who had no sins to answer for; and which she took an opportunity of effecting when they were at home alone. The Jury returned a verdict of *Not Guilty*, believing her to have been insane at the time.

This paragraph is copied from a Newspaper; but it is not precisely correct. The unhappy and misled girl thought that she should send her little brother to heaven the sooner by putting him to death, and this madness was brought on her by attending a Methodist Revival meeting.

A correspondent has sent me the following case:

Since Christmas last, the wife of a respectable farmer, not two miles from Chesterfield, Derbyshire, being pregnant, was in a very indifferent state of health, attended by a nervous affection, and lowness of spirits; but by the assistance of her medical attendants, she was much recovered. The curate of the parish hearing she was ill, went to see her: and although some of the family had the good sense to request him not to see her, fearing that his conversation might do her harm; yet he would not be refused. After the usual compliments had passed, he asked her, if she was prepared to die, to which she answered, she hoped she was; for she did not know that she had ever done any one harm. The parson told her, that those who thought themselves prepared to die, would certainly be damned. This had such an effect upon the poor woman's mind, that it threw her into hysterics; brought on abortion; and a few days terminated her existence, leaving a husband and a numerous family of infant children to lament her loss.

Such are the benefits of religion.

The difference to which I alluded, in the ancient and modern mode of travelling among the Methodists' Preachers, is this, that when John Wesley first sent out his missionaries; they had no better conveyance than a palfrey, if they rode at all, and he only allowed them sixpence for each meal: now, the different stations for the regular preachers are so many rich benefices; and instead of plain garments and downcast looks, we find them splendid and gay, making a para-

dise of this life, instead of tormenting themselves here to prepare for one in another. Nor do I grudge it to them, if they can find fools to support it. I can only wish that their incomes were earned in a more useful and more honourable way.

Now, Thomas, for a little more criticism! At page 18, you say: "If it could be proved that man would never have to answer, to his maker, for his conduct in the body, and at the same time, all human laws were set aside, *it is doubtful* we should soon be made miserably acquainted with the tender mercies and humane principles of Materialists." I believe it is doubtful! Did you ever hear a Materialist say he wished to live without laws? Eh, Thomas? Do you not find us incessantly complaining that the laws are not good enough to make good men? Instead of desiring to be without laws, we say the existing laws, in the aggregate, are good for nothing; and we call for a legislature, that shall be competent to make such laws, as shall correspond with the advanced and advancing knowledge of this age.

It is proved, that man is not answerable for his conduct to his maker; he is answerable only to himself and fellows in society. He knows no intelligent maker, beyond his parents. Say you, and prove you, any thing to the contrary?

Again: "for men who are insensible to sacred things, must be partially so to things which are wicked and cruel:" This is a ridiculous inference; if we allow the member of the sentence to have any meaning. To be insensible to any thing is, not to feel, to know it. I am insensible to what you call sacred things under the presumption that they are real things; but I contend that they are fabled and not real; and, therefore, I am sensible, that *you also are insensible to sacred things*.

Being insensible to sacred things is no inference that I am insensible to things wicked and cruel. I detest things and persons wicked and cruel, as much as any man who ever considered them; therefore I am sensible that such things and persons should be avoided and reprobated, punished and reformed. You can say no more for yourself, nor for any man.

Continuing the same sentence, you proceed: "so that, with them nothing relative to men of different principles can be right; while, at the same time, their own actions, however base, are boasted of as virtues; and were it not for the restraint of human laws, and the languid and nearly expiring members of a once tender and manly conscience in many,



whom, it is to be feared, you have ruined by your doctrines; I say, were it not for these restraints, *it is doubtful* our land which is the happy home of contented millions, would become the hateful spot of far more numerous private assassins, and also of public murderers!" Very doubtful! Here is a general charge of something against Materialists; but no one can tell what. Here are inferences without premises, and premises without inferences!

As to the *private assassins* and *public murderers*, matters never can be worse under that head, than they have been among Christians. When Christianity came into the world, it found *murder a trade*; but so far from putting down this nefarious traffic, it has gone on increasing it until it received a check from Materialism. Now Materialism is everywhere advocating humanity, and shaming Christians out of their barbarous practices, we are got into a sort of reforming age: and the Christians, themselves, are endeavouring to soften their brutality by cant, and by associations for professed humane and charitable purposes. But, on the score of assassinations and murders, nothing can be pictured more horrible than it has been among the Christians, wherever they have existed: nothing like it can possibly happen again, so long as the present state of knowledge can be supported. Thomas Shepherd, you have never read the history of Christianity, or you would blush at the name of Christian. I will engage to say, that, *one in a hundred, of every human being that has been called Christian, has been an assassin and a murderer!* The history of Christianity is a history of bloodshed, horror and desolation: and not only here and there; but every where, wherever it has existed, taking the whole period of its existence in each place into consideration. As I have before said, philosophy has long been operating upon this brutal Christianity, and where it has been most operative, we begin to see the Christians softened down from their usual brutality.

In charging upon the priests (Methodists and all others) that the whole of their preaching is a trick to rob the labourer of the fruit of his industry; you call upon me for a proof. I proclaim, that intellect does not exist out of the animal world, and unless you or one of those priests can shew that intellect does exist beyond the animal world, my proof is established.

Another specimen of Thomas's rhetoric! In allusion to my challenge to meet the learned Dr. Adam Clarke, he says:

Would you be compared with him? It shall be granted:—for

although your boasted knowledge seems to have been extracted merely from the rubbish which surrounds the precious metal (of the refined particles of which he possesses an ample store,)—it must be granted there is a small, though almost imperceptible analogy between him and yourself.—But when we compare scientific characters to the heavenly bodies,—Dr. Clarke vies with the splendid luminary of day, while you bear a very faint resemblance to one of those stars which may be just perceived by an acute sight, for a short space of time, when the sun is at his greatest distance from our horizon; and which retires from our view at the moment the glimmering of twilight is announced; while its sister stars and those noble peers of the heavens, which we call planets, continue to struggle with the increasing rays of light, till all in succession, according to their respective magnitudes and distances, retire from our wondering sight,—leaving the moon, the illustrious queen of their nocturnal empire, on her western throne bending her sceptre towards the chambers of the east, to proclaim her resplendent consort—undisputed king of day!

This is almost poetical! and would be quite so were it not for the imperfections of the rhetoric. *The star which retires from our view at the moment the glimmering of twilight is announced*—is not good. The star does not retire—twilight is not announced but announces itself.—*While its sister stars and those noble peers of the heavens, which we call planets, continue to struggle with the increasing rays of light, till all in succession, according to their respective magnitudes and distances, retire from our wondering sight.* Here are the little planets of our sphere called peers, and placed in the masculine gender: whilst the huge suns, the fixed stars, are called sisters, and placed in the feminine gender! They do not retire from our sight—our sight retires from them, is rendered less capable—diminished with respect to those distant objects. Being bright or illumined bodies, we see them best in the absence of the sun's light: nor do they struggle. Here is the moon, the queen of the nocturnal empire! if any one can define what a *nocturnal empire* means, and over whom the moon reigns. Egad! it must be the empire of lunatics, in which Thomas Shepherd wishes to be distinguished. Or the empire of fairies, ghosts, holy and unholy, hobgoblins, spirits, &c. to become one of which, Thomas, as a Methodist, so heartily pants! Then we have *the queen on her western throne, bending her sceptre towards the chambers of the east, to proclaim her resplendent consort undisputed king of day.* Here is literary finery! spangled paper! But this is an odd kind of marriage



between this planetary king and queen! The latter cannot get into the chambers of the east, nor the former get into the chambers of the west; whilst the other is there! This marriage can never have been consummated! Better to have had the earth for queen, and the moon for the offspring of the marriage:—that would have been more rhetorically correct. Or the whole of the planets of the solar system might have formed the sun's seraglio—but Thomas is too much of a prude to speak of a seraglio! The Methodists perform all their business in secret, on this head; and indulge the motion of the spirit as a heavenly licence to partake of all the purposes and sweets of a *love feast*! *God's lambs will play*, said a Methodist preacher of this county, lately, as an excuse for getting one of his young saints with child! There will be rare work among the saints, when the anti-conception scheme, recommended by our Political Economists, gets among them! This conception spoils their sanctimonious gravity—for it would shake their craft to preach that more than one had been miraculous!

In attempting to refute an assertion of mine, that natural effects must have natural causes, Thomas says: "On this view, my believing in the existence of a supernatural existence, is the effect of a natural cause; and your denial of all supernatural existences, is likewise the effect of a natural cause. Here is an evident contradiction, which you cannot possibly deny, so long as you continue to object to a supernatural agency." Thomas thought that he had clenched the nail of his philosophy here: but he is mistaken! Now, Thomas, the error lies with you. You do not believe in the existence of a supernatural existence! You may hope and fear about it; but you cannot believe, unless you have some proof of the existence demonstratively, or by analogy. Belief is an act emanating from knowledge; and to teach a child to say—*I believe in God, or, in this, that, and the other thing*, is false and preposterous. If you know, you believe: if you know and believe, you can exhibit, you can demonstrate that belief and knowledge. But I will give you a specimen of your belief, in the following words, from one of the most powerful writers among the Christian fathers.

Tertullian, disputing against certain heretics who denied the reality of Christ's human nature; reasons thus. The Son of God was crucified: it is no shame to own it, because it is a thing to be ashamed of. The Son of God died: it is wholly credible, because it is absurd. When buried, he rose

again to life: it is certain, because it is impossible. *De Carne Christi.* § 5.

Tertullian found some such queer reasoners, as you find to deal with, and this was his silencing argument, when he found that he was beaten from every other point! You say, you believe that which you do not know, that which Tertullian acknowledged to be shameful, absurd, and impossible! In this, both he and you confess, that the empire of which you are members is an empire of lunatics, and that your pride is to renounce your reason! You acknowledge with Tertullian, that "the anchor of the Christian's hope is not fixed within the limited confines of human reason! and an explanation of the blessed realities of the Christian religion, to a mind altogether hostile to its interests, is a moral impossibility!" Aye, and a physical impossibility! impossible either with the Methodist or his idol God!

There, Thomas Shepherd, you must write something more before I can notice you further; but I hope that this will convince you, that Methodism is not wisdom; and that a Methodist is a lunatic, a fool, an idolator.

RICHARD CARLILE.

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#### DEATH OF MR. NIELD.

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ON Wednesday week, at Ripponden, Yorkshire, aged 60 years, died, Daniel Nield, surgeon, &c. and his remains were interred in Ripponden Church-yard at noon of Sunday last, on which occasion the road was lined with spectators, and the church-yard filled with them; he having exercised the duties of his profession in that neighbourhood for more than twenty years, with honour to himself, and benefit to those who stood in need of his medical services. The doctor was born near Delph, in Saddleworth, of poor but respectable parents, who taught him the clothing business: he, however, in early life, applied himself to the study of the sciences, particularly those of Philology, Mathematics, Anatomy, Medicine, and Chemistry, in some of which he far excelled most of those who follow his profession. He commenced his medical practice under a Mr. Wrigley, who was then surgeon at Delph, and soon distinguished himself by several remarkable cures. About fifteen or sixteen years ago, he took a tour through many parts of England, delivering lectures on Chemistry, by which he attracted the attention of the late Bishop of Landaff, (Dr. Watson)



who invited him to his hospitable mansion, honoured him with his patronage, and showed him the most generous and respectful attention; of which he (Mr. N.) often spoke with the most lively gratitude: although he long lived a professed Deist, and firmly and calmly died in the same belief. In short, Dr. N. was a man who possessed strong intellectual faculties, which he highly cultivated by reading, meditation, and experiments; grounding his knowledge on the principles of nature, as far as he could trace them; and preferred acknowledging his ignorance, rather than profess to believe what he did not understand. He published some valuable pamphlets on chemical subjects, and was a lively and instructive companion to the end of his life. He was highly and deservedly esteemed and respected by all who knew him, and were capable of appreciating his intrinsic worth. He was a distinguished advocate for the natural Rights of Man, in opposition to hereditary privileges, and legalized speculation, whether in Church or State.

TO MR. CARLILE.

DEAR SIR,  
Stokesly, Yorkshire, March 22, 1824.

HAVING lately had occasion to be in Stockton, I was induced to attend the Unitarian Chapel there; from a representation, that the minister, a Mr. Meek, had been abusing you, and all who professed your principles. I understand the Methodist Preachers are in the habit of calling Mr. M. and his congregation infidels; in consequence of which, Mr. M. had undertaken a course of lectures or sermons to prove that they were not so; to accomplish this purpose, it seems to have been a part of his plan to endeavour to out do even the Methodists in abusing and vilifying you. In this, however, in my opinion, he falls far short of his rivals; for, on the Sunday that I had the pleasure (the *patience* I should say) to hear him, he was quite moderate in point of scurrility, when compared to what we generally hear from the pulpits of the Methodists.

It appeared, that Mr. Meek had given out, the previous Sunday, that he would answer from the pulpit any objections to the resurrection of Christ which might be sent to him; and he informed his audience that he had in consequence received a letter, but (luckily for him) it was anonymous, he therefore *excused himself from reading it*. I thought it a pity to allow him to get over the thing in that kind of way; and, therefore, when I returned home, I wrote him the following letter, of which, up to this time, he has not deigned to take the least notice. Until he does, I have a fair right

to presume that he cannot answer it. Should you think it worthy to occupy a place in the pages of "The Republican," you will oblige your

Sincere friend, and fellow Citizen,

ROBERT ARMSTRONG.

SIR,

WHEN I heard of the bold and ostentatious challenge, you gave last Sunday week, to answer from the pulpit any objections to the resurrection of Christ which might be sent to you, I was rather surprized; for I entertained an opinion, that you were likely to know, that Deistical writers have brought forward such objections to that supposed supernatural event, as cannot be satisfactorily refuted.

In consequence of this challenge, it appears, you received an anonymous letter, stating one of the author's objections to the resurrection to be, the want of harmony in the Gospels. This objection, however, you got over by calling the numerous and palpable contradictions to be found in these books—"little discrepancies that do not invalidate the truth of the facts related in them:" and to strengthen this assertion, you asked, if three or four historians had given an account of a battle, was it reasonable to suppose, that that battle had never taken place, because they differed in minor points in the relation of it. If the historians were authentic, I answer in the negative; for these reasons:

First, because even the principal facts in a battle are often distorted to serve party purposes.

Secondly, from the noise and tumult that always attend a battle, it is almost impossible for historians to agree in their descriptions of it. And thirdly: A probable event does not require such strong and correct evidence to obtain credit as an improbable one; to this every candid person will assent, and it betrays a want of sound judgment in you to place the one on an equal footing with the other.

I now beg to state a few objections to the resurrection of Christ, hoping that you will either name a day to read and refute them from the pulpit, or answer them in a letter addressed to me.

Objection 1st. Because, no one has yet proved the Gospels to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem; or that such a person as Jesus ever lived or died there.

2d. Because, no one has yet proved that Jesus Christ was dead when taken from the cross.

3d. Because, no one has yet proved that his body was not stolen from the sepulchre. You tried your utmost to make us believe, that he could not have got out without supernatural aid, because the chief priests had placed a watch and sealed the stone. But mind, they never thought of doing this till the *day after* he was entombed. Now this was like locking the stable door after the horse was stolen. You also talked much about the largeness



of the stone, but we are told that Joseph himself placed it at the sepulchre.

4th. Because, no one knows how Matthew *knew* that an angel appeared and rolled away the stone, and that the guards were so terribly frightened as he represents, *he not being present*.

5th. Because, if the guards had *really* seen what Matthew states, it is very unlikely that they would have *perjured themselves* so soon after.

6th. Because, NO ONE SAW JESUS RISE FROM THE TOMB.

7th. Because, Matthew says, that at the crucifixion the graves opened, the vail of the Temple was rent, that there was darkness over the land for three hours, and that, at the resurrection (*and not till then*) several dead bodies of saints arose and walked into the city!!! And also relates many other things equally preposterous.

8th. Because, it is said, that Christ said, as Jonas was three nights and three days in the whale's belly, so shall the son of man be *three nights* and three days in the heart of the earth. Now, we are told that Jesus was crucified on *Friday* and that he rose again on *Sunday morning*. Reconcile this if you can.

9th. Because, it is said that Christ said, that his disciples were to sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Now Judas Iscariot was a suicide.

10th. Because, it is said, that Christ said, that some of his disciples should not taste of death till he came, and said several other things respecting his coming which have all proved false.

11th. Because, the Bible, excepting the scraps of morality interspersed in it, contains little else but bad laws, horrid murders, bloody wars, improbable tales, and obscene love songs.

12th. Besides the above objections, I shall now add another to show that the story of Christ's ascension is also *not proved*.

Because, Matthew and John, who, it is said, witnessed Christ's pretended miracles, say not a word about it. Mark and Luke (said to have been pupils of Paul) indeed mention it; but of what use is their testimony, when it is universally acknowledged that they were not eye witnesses of what they relate?

To conclude, *there is no one who says expressly, and for himself, that he saw either the Resurrection or the Ascension*, and yet you priests assert that if we believe not these *fairy tales* we shall be damned. But this is the very threat that most exposes the weakness of the entire fraud. It was persecution and prosecution that founded the Christian religion, and it is persecution and prosecution, aided by the wealth, power, and influence of interested parties, that now uphold it. Let any of these things be withdrawn, and the whole delusion will vanish like mist before the rising sun.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

ROBERT ARMSTRONG.

To Mr. Meek, Unitarian  
Minister, Stockton.

## TO MR. CARLILE.

SIR,

Manchester, April 5, 1824.

IN perusing the Republican of the 13th of February last, I find *one of the most important questions* submitted to the clergy in general, but more particularly addressed to the Reverend Solomon Herchell, High Priest of the Jews in England. Had you addressed Mr. Hindmarsh\*, of this town, or any Sectarian minister, you might have anticipated an answer; but from the above individual†, I feel confident a reply could not have been within the reach of your expectation, any more than mine. I have consulted with a few very learned Polish Jews of this town, who have made very deep researches into what is termed sacred and prophane history; and to whom I have presented your letter of the above date; but, so far from offering any thing in the shape of refutation, they have conjointly made this declaration, *that it stands incontrovertible*. You, no doubt, pride yourself (and very justly too) on the rapid progress you have made among Christians, in producing liberal sentiments, eradicating absurd and ridiculous tenets, and in elucidating real, substantial, and useful knowledge; but, lest it should be thought, that these invaluable blessings exist only amongst refined Nazarenes, permit me to assure you, *that there is not a sensible Israelite in existence, but feels a conviction of the inutility of the frivolous dogmas left them as a legacy from their forefathers, with the exception of those only whose trade is religion*. Their present bondage; their want of power; the dread of a recurrence of Christian tyranny and persecution; together with their insignificance as a body, are evident drawbacks to the assertion of independence: indeed, they consider it providentially necessary, in their present condition, to uphold their religion, even to a degree of enthusiasm. Remove a foundation, and away goes the superstructure: *shake but the synagogue and the church must eventually fall*. As the modern Israelites are not quite so invulnerable and salamander-like as their forefathers, the priests and prophets, they are rather content with consuming in silence, than in being consumed by fire: but it might have been expected from so large a body of Israelites in England, whose knowledge of scripture indubitably surpasses that of all other nations, that one would have volunteered, as a substitute for the High Priest, to offer some remarks on your important question. Their ability

\* You will, perhaps, be a little surprised to hear that Mr. Hindmarsh declined business on Sunday, March 21, having on that day preached his farewell sermon at the New Jerusalem Chapel, Salford, to a very crowded, respectable, and, no doubt, enlightened congregation.

† The stipulated salary of the High Priest of the Jews is, £800 per annum, independent of customary presents and ceremonial fees.



to the task is unquestionable; their silence seems rather to imply an impossibility of refutation, than otherwise. As all questions of public importance are subject to public scrutiny, I beg leave to suggest a few observations, which, in my estimation, are highly important, not only to the question at issue, but to the prevalent desire of eliciting truth on every side. There is an admission in the Bible, that after the return of the Jews from their Babylonian Captivity, the law was expounded to them publicly, which created much surprise as to its novelty. If such a law existed before their bondage, it must have been familiar to them during that bondage; although they had no convenience of paying due observance to some of its leading features, still their calamitous situation, it is presumed, would have operated as a stimulus to excite them to an observance of those minor points which they were permitted to retain. If so, how could that appear as a novelty which was a daily practice for seventy years? The only inference to be drawn from such an incongruity is, that so far from its being an ancient record in that day, it must have been arranged and compiled under the auspices of Ezra and a collective body of captives. It, therefore, stands, as an incontrovertible position, that the Bible had no existence prior to the time of Ezra; and the story of Abraham circumcising his son Isaac is consequently fabulous. But, as all forms, modes, customs, and habits, peculiar to nations, have had their origin from some experimental, or other cause, that which gave rise to circumcision is, in my opinion, of all others, the most interesting and important to be traced: as, it, in a great measure, concerns the present subject of inquiry. That the practice does exist and has existed for many centuries, is as certain as the existence of Jews themselves; and that it must have had its origin is equally as certain, as its continued practice. A rational and modest inquiry into its origin, is, therefore, considered necessary, as it may have a tendency to remove from the minds of deluded fanatics, chimerical notions which fabulous theology imposes. Most oriental nations pay due observance at the present day, to circumcision; but whether it arises from the peculiar construction of the pores being susceptible of foul and corroding matter, engendered by the influence of the sun, and by which means it became necessary as a preventative of ulcerations and diseases, in consequence of continual perspirations, or whether they have taken it as a memorial from the supposition of Abraham circumcising his son\*, I leave to your indefatigable mind to investigate; feeling convinced of its being dispassionately and impartially treated, I remain, Mr. Carlile,

Sir, your humble Servant,

N. W.

\* I fear N. W. has set me a task, that is not to be accomplished. The case is, that the custom of circumcision is older than any records we have of the people who have observed it; therefore, whether it took its origin

## CAUTIONS AGAINST THE NATURAL ENCROACHMENTS OF POWER.

FROM CATO'S LETTERS.

PEOPLE are ruined by their ignorance of human nature; which ignorance leads them to credulity, and to too great a confidence in particular men. They fondly imagine that he, who, possessing a great deal by their favour owes them great gratitude, and all good offices, will therefore return their kindness. But alas! how often are they mistaken in their trustees and favourites; who, the more they have given them, are often the more incited to take all, and to return destruction for generous usage. The common people generally think that *great* men have *great* minds, and *scorn* base actions; which judgment is so false, that the basest and worst of all actions have been done by great men: perhaps they have not picked private pockets, but they have done worse; they have often disturbed, deceived, and pillaged the world; and he who is capable of the highest mischief, is capable of the meanest: he who plunders a country of a million of money, would, in suitable circumstances, steal a silver spoon; and a conqueror, who steals and pillages a kingdom, would, in an humble fortune, rifle a portmanteau, or rob an orchard.

Political jealousy, therefore, in the people, is a necessary and laudable passion. But in a chief magistrate, a jealousy of his people is not so justifiable, their ambition being only to preserve themselves; whereas, it is natural for power to be striving to enlarge itself, and to be encroaching upon those who have none. The most laudable jealousy of a magistrate is to be jealous *for* his people, which will shew that he loves them, and has used them well; but to be jealous *of* them would denote that he has evil designs against them, and has used them ill. The peoples' jealousy tends to preserve liberty; and the prince's to destroy it. *Venice* is a glorious instance of the former, and so is *England*; and all nations who have lost their liberty, are melancholy proofs of the latter.

Power is naturally active, vigilant and distrustful; which qualities in it push it upon all means and expedients to fortify itself, and upon destroying all opposition, and even all seeds of opposition,

from a frivolous or a serious cause is not now to be ascertained, as far as I know any thing of history. The Egyptians, the Arabians, the Persians, and the Ethiopians or Abyssinians are known to have practised circumcision from time immemorial. It is now common to the Mahometans, to the Jews, and to the Abyssinians. I know of no other people who practice it. A little cleanliness, a periodical ablution, supersedes all argument for the physical necessity of the practice.

R. C.



and make it restless as long as any thing stands in its way. It would do what it pleases, and have no check. Now because liberty *chastises* and *shortens* power, therefore power would *extinguish* liberty; and, consequently, liberty has *too much* cause to be exceeding jealous, and *always* upon her defence. Power has many advantages over her: it has generally *numerous* guards, *many* creatures, and *much* treasure; besides it has *more* craft and experience, *less* honesty and innocence: and whereas power *can*, and for the most part does, subsist where liberty is not, liberty cannot subsist without power; so that she has, as it were, the enemy always at her gate.

Some have said, that Magistrates being accountable to none but God, ought to know no other restraint. But this reasoning is as frivolous as it is wicked; for no good man cares how many punishments and penalties lie in the way to an office which he does not intend to commit. A man who does not intend to commit murder, is not sorry that murder is punished with death. And as to wicked men, their being accountable to God, whom they do not fear, is no security to us against their folly and malice; and to say that we ought to have no security against them, is to insult common sense, and give the lie to the first law of nature, that of self-preservation. Human reason says, that there is no obedience, no regard due to those rulers, who govern by no rule but their lust. Such men are *no* rulers; they are outlaws, who being at defiance with God and man, are protected by no law of God, or of reason. By what precept, moral or divine, are we forbid to kill a wolf, or burn an infected ship? Is it unlawful to prevent wickedness and misery, and to resist the authors of them? Are crimes sanctified by their greatness? And is he who robs a country and murders ten thousand, *less* a criminal than he who steals single guineas, and takes away *single* lives? Is there any sin in *preventing*, and *restraining*, or *resisting*, the greatest sin that can be committed, that of oppressing and destroying mankind by wholesale? Surely there never were such open, such shameless, such selfish impostors, as the advocates for lawless power. It is a damnable sin to oppress *them*; yet it is a damnable sin to oppose them when *they* oppress, or gain by the oppression of others. When they are hurt themselves *ever so little*, or but *think* themselves hurt, they are the loudest of all men in their complaints, and the most outrageous in their behaviour: but when *others* are plundered, oppressed and butchered, complaints are *sedition*; and to seek redress damnation. Is not *this* to be the authors of all wickedness and falsehood.

To conclude: power without controul appertains to God alone; and no man ought to be trusted with what no man is equal to. In truth, there are so many passions and inconsistencies, and so much *selfishness* belonging to human nature, that *we can scarce be too much upon our guard against each other*. The only security we can have that men will be honest, is to make it their interest

to be honest; and the best defence which he can have against their being knaves, is to make it terrible to them to be knaves. As there are many men wicked in some stations, who would be innocent in others; *the best way is to make wickedness unsafe in any station.*

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## ROMAN PATRIOTISM FOUNDED ON INJUSTICE, AND THE RUIN OF MANKIND.

FROM THE CANDID PHILOSOPHER.

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THE patriotism of ancient Rome has been much extolled by modern writers, but I think unjustly. Her patriotism was founded on the most flagrant injustice and iniquity, and therefore deserved not so much to be called patriotism, as a desire to render Rome the mistress of the universe..

For this purpose she scrupled not committing all manner of tyrannous and wicked acts against the liberties of mankind. Her feverish fondness for universal empire laid desolate all the known world. The possessions, the habitations, the paintings, the sculptures, all the riches of the Romans were the spoils of plundered nations. Thus they erected to themselves an empire, as unwieldy as it was unjust, on the ruins of their fellow creatures. What then are all their lectures and pompous declamations on the love of their country? What their laboured orations in praise of LIBERTY? Indisputable proofs indeed of their eloquence, but not of their humanity. If the language of benevolence were to constitute the character, we must allow it is due to these Romans; but if actions are to ascertain the right, and to be considered as the criterion of justice, we shall find it a difficult matter to make good their claim, though we were masters of eloquence equal to their own.

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